

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding SC Residency

How long must I live in South Carolina before I can establish residency?

Under most circumstances, a person must live in South Carolina for 12 consecutive months in order to establish residency.

What kind of documents establish intent to become a SC resident?

1. Statement of full time employment;
2. Possession of a valid South Carolina voter registration card;
3. Designating South Carolina as state of legal residence on military record;
4. Possession of a valid South Carolina driver's license, or if a non driver, a South Carolina identification card. Failure to obtain this within 90 days of the establishment of the intent to become a South Carolina resident will delay the beginning date of residency eligibility;
5. Possession of a valid South Carolina vehicle registration card. Failure to obtain this within 45 days of the establishment of the intent to become a South Carolina resident will delay the beginning date of residency eligibility;
6. Maintenance of domicile in South Carolina;
7. Paying South Carolina income taxes as a resident during the past tax year, including income earned outside of South Carolina from the date South Carolina domicile was claimed;
8. Ownership of principal residence in South Carolina; and
9. Licensing for professional practice (if applicable) in South Carolina.

*Please note that any single indicator may not be conclusive.

My parents and I were not residents of South Carolina when I graduated from high school, are there any State Scholarships or Grants I can qualify for?

Students who did not graduate from high school in South Carolina and were not dependents of SC residents at the time of high school graduation may be eligible to receive the SC Need-based Grant and/or Lottery Tuition Assistance. Please contact the financial aid office at your institution about your eligibility.

I am a member of the military. How does that affect my SC residency?

Members of the military permanently assigned in SC on active duty and their dependents qualify under an exception category. Military members and their dependents may be charged in-state tuition and fees without having to establish a permanent home in South Carolina.

What happens if my parents are transferred out-of-state?

Generally, the student may continue to claim SC residency as long as he/she is continuously enrolled



during all regular academic terms (fall and spring terms or their equivalent). The family must have lived in South Carolina for over three years prior to moving.

What is the difference in applying for residency as dependent or independent?

If a parent, guardian, or spouse provided more than half of the student's support for the past twelve months, the student is considered dependent and it is the parent, guardian, or spouse that must meet the residency requirements. If the student provided the majority of support, then the student may be eligible to apply as independent.

Am I required to provide over 50% of my total financial support to be considered independent?

You must provide over 50% of your total support with earnings coming from his/her own earnings or income from employment, investments, or payments from trusts, grants, scholarships, commercial loans, or payments made in accordance with court order. Total support must also be greater than total expenses.

Can gifts from parents and relatives be counted as support that a student has provided?

No. Gifts are considered money coming from elsewhere and do not count toward financial independence. Financial support must come from the sources listed in the law/regulations.

Are Parent (PLUS) loans considered financial support contributed by students?

No. PLUS loans are applied for and awarded to the parents.

Are pre-paid tuition plans considered financial support provided by the parents?

No. Even though pre-payment plans are in students' names, the parents contributed the funds and received the tax benefits. Therefore, they are considered funds from the parents.

Can I use the money I've saved in my savings and checking accounts to establish my financial independence?

A student may be allowed to use money saved in a savings or checking account if he/she can prove that the funds are from allowable sources. Allowable sources consist of his/her own earnings or income from employment, investments, or payments from trusts, grants, scholarships, commercial loans, or payments made in accordance with court order.

Does owning property in South Carolina allow students to receive in-state tuition?

No. For independent students, owning property by itself does not allow students to receive in-state tuition, as the other requirements still must be met. For parents of dependent students, South Carolina must be the primary state of residence. Simply owning property is not sufficient.

If I have lived in South Carolina for more than one year, does that make me eligible for in-state tuition?

No. There is nothing automatic about residency. You must meet all of the requirements, submit a residency application, and be approved before you become eligible.

If I move here and live with relatives, does that make me eligible?

Not unless you qualify as a dependent on the federal tax return of the relative.

Am I eligible for residency if I use a South Carolina address on all of my records and legal documents?

You still must meet the other requirements. For admission, other factors are important, such as the source of transcripts and addresses of parents.

Where do I submit an appeal if I do not agree with the institution's decision?

Students wishing to appeal a decision must follow the grievance procedures established by the college or university to which they apply.

For more information about Residency, contact:

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Please note that the information provided is subject to change.